

ANG

Bayan

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Editorial

Arouse, organize and mobilize the people in their millions

Plans by the Arroyo clique to set the stage for it to rule beyond 2010 are now in full swing. Its dirty and criminal schemes know no bounds—from bombings, bribery, maneuverings, coercion, killings and repression—to ensure the elimination of anyone who stands in its way.

The people are all the more urgently demanding an end to Arroyo's thoroughly corrupt and brutal rule. They are one in crying for an end to terrorist rule, plunder and repression. The people must hone and wield their weapons of resistance—the armed revolutionary movement, the open mass movement and the united front.

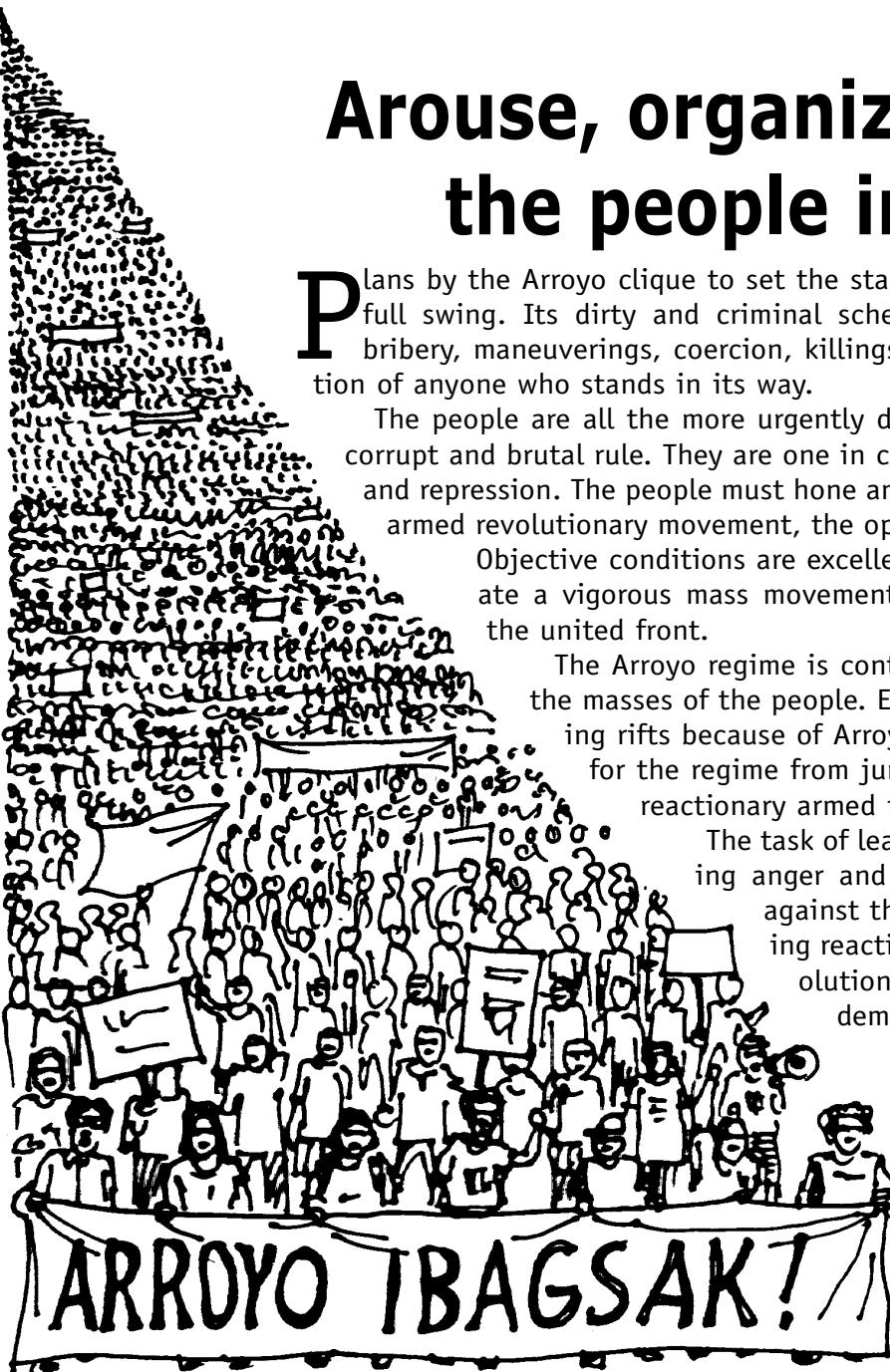
Objective conditions are excellent to advance tactical offensives, generate a vigorous mass movement, further people's struggles and expand the united front.

The Arroyo regime is continually being exposed and isolated from the masses of the people. Even the ruling clique is beset by deepening rifts because of Arroyo's greed for wealth and power. Support for the regime from junior officers and the rank and file of the reactionary armed forces is likewise increasingly eroding.

The task of leading the people, harnessing their mounting anger and transforming this into a material force against the ruling US-Arroyo regime and the existing reactionary system as a whole rests on the revolutionary movement and the progressive and democratic forces.

We must assiduously and broadly arouse the people and conduct propaganda work among them. We must diligently combine solid organizing and broad and fast-paced organizing, the various frameworks within which to build the united front and daring and creative means of advancing various forms of struggle.

The times demand prompt, system-



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atic and all-out preparations to effectively arouse, organize and mobilize the biggest numbers and united them into a powerful force against Arroyo. We must rapidly gather strength for a decisive battle with the ruling regime.

We must lay down the means by which we could reach out to the people in communities, factories, schools, offices, markets and streets to explain the issues and mobilize them in their millions. We must effectively deploy the biggest number of cadres, leaders and mass activists, organizers and propagandists, train and mobilize them to unite with, lead, expand and mobilize the broad masses.

We must gain expertise in identifying the issues that are most important and closest to the masses' interests and struggles against the ruling regime. We must form open organizations and sectoral and multisectoral alliances to arouse, organize and mobilize the biggest numbers in the shortest time possible even as we assiduously ensure the formation and consolidation of strong and leading core groups within their ranks.

The key to mobilizing the peo-

ple lies in effectively demonstrating to them the tight link between their abject poverty and oppression and the Arroyo regime's grave crimes, among them the numerous scandals and cases of plunder and bribery and mounting campaigns of killing and other acts of violence against activists and other anti-Arroyo forces. Not to be forgotten are the regime's brazen attempts to amend the constitution as well as other maneuvers to prolong Arroyo's rule, deprive the people of their democratic rights and serve the interests of foreign powers.

We must relentlessly pursue our efforts at agitating the people and conducting propaganda directly among them. Popularize rallies, mass meetings, fora, group discussions, cultural presentations, leafleteering, mounting propaganda posters and painting slogans on walls and similar methods of directly reaching out to the people. Use popular forms such as ringtones and jingles, songs, poems and street plays to effectively reach out to the biggest possible number. Let us maximize the use of the media and the inter-

net to popularize videos, radio programs and similar forms of propaganda.

Simultaneously, let us likewise set up various forms of alliances and cooperative relations between the progressive forces and influential well-known personalities actively fighting the Arroyo regime. Let us encourage them to go to the people—in fora and community and street gatherings where they could directly express their support for the people's aspirations and actions and expose and assail the regime without meeting the obstacles usually put up by Arroyo's minions in parliament.

Using clandestine and prudent means, let us continue to reach out to progressive, democratic, discontented and enlightened elements within the reactionary armed forces. Let us arouse, organize, unite and cooperate with them. In due time, it will be important to coordinate the people's struggles with the military's withdrawal of support for, and resistance to, the ruling regime.

It is of the utmost importance to vigorously advance all this despite threats and intensifying acts of violence by the Arroyo regime against the people. Let us tirelessly expose, condemn and hold the regime accountable for every political killing, abduction and other violations of the people's human rights.

Let us exert every effort to arouse, organize and mobilize the broad masses of the people and forge the broadest possible unity against the Arroyo regime. Let us bring forth gigantic mass actions and create a powerful storm of people power that will decisively put an end to the Arroyo clique's corrupt and increasingly failing and unstable rule.

AB



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The US-Arroyo regime's fascist schemes are bound to fail

Communist Party of the Philippines
November 20, 2007

The US-Arroyo regime has become increasingly isolated, fragile and insecure in the face of the people's widespread indignation over its large-scale corruption, bribery, dirty maneuvers and its grave crimes of fascism and terror. It is constantly battered by vigorous protests and tirades from the ranks of the democratic people's movement and opposition forces. It is gravely weakened by deepening cracks within the ruling coalition. Its machinations continue to be exposed and resisted by the people.

The Arroyo regime cannot continue to rule much longer under the present terms. It can only hope to extend its hold on power through more intensified fascism and terrorism. Its plan for the next three years is to justify the imposition of increasingly draconian measures by laying out scripted scenarios of "terrorist bombings" and other brutal antipeople acts. The ultimate aim is to muffle all opposition and pave the way for the extension of its rule.

The Filipino people are being made to suffer the regime's open and disguised state violence. This follows the same pattern of unabated extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, series of bombings and coverups prior to the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and the outright imposition of barefaced fascist rule in 1972.

Three years before the end of Ferdinand Marcos' supposed last term, he carried out a series of bombings and other acts of vio-

lence which served as pretext for his formal imposition of martial rule on September 21, 1972. Fourteen major bombing incidents erupted in Metro Manila in 1970, followed by even bigger bombings in the next two years. In June 1971, Marcos' covert operatives bombed the Constitutional Convention Hall. This was followed by bombings of the opposition rally at Plaza Miranda, the NAWASA main pipe at the San Juan-Quezon City boundary, the Manila City Hall, the COMELEC Building, the Congress Building, several MERALCO offices and substations and the Doctor's Pharmaceuticals Building in Caloocan City.

To make the spate of bombings look real, the residences of Sen. Jose Roy and then Rep. Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, both closely allied with Marcos, were also superficially "bombed." Three weeks before martial law was declared, in quick succession, Joe's Department Store, the Good Earth Plaza and the Manila City Hall were bombed by the later self-confessed Sgt. Mariano Gabutin and his special operations team of military explosive and demolition experts. And as a finale, Malacañang published a news account of a supposed ambush of then Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile.

Indeed, the bombings of the



Glorietta Mall and of the Batasan Pambansa have all the hallmarks of Marcosian strategem. They signal a spate of more bombings and other acts of violence against the people as the term of the present regime nears its end.

No less than the regime's own security chief, who has a long bloody record of masterminding "bombings" and "terrorist acts," admitted that the Arroyo regime knew beforehand about the recent series of bombings. Immediately after the Glorietta Mall blast on October 19, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales declared it to be the work of "destabilizers." He followed this up with a more self-revealing statement that ten such bombings should justify an imposition of martial law. Again, right after the Batasan bombing last November 13, he said that they had previous information about such an attack two weeks prior.

There is no doubt that it is Malacañang's inner circle of securi-

ty and military officials that is behind these scenario-building "bombings" and "terrorist acts" as part of the plan to extend Arroyo's rule.

But Arroyo and her fascist schemers so deride the Filipino people that they grossly underestimate the courage, the strength, the lessons and the wisdom that the people have drawn and developed in their historic struggle to put an end to a fascist dictatorship. The Filipino people are ever determined never again to allow such a fascist dictatorship to rule

over the country.

Day in and day out, the revolutionary, progressive and democratic forces and the people are determinedly exposing and resisting schemes aimed at furthering fascism and establishing outright fascist rule.

The Filipino people are acutely suspicious of the Arroyo ruling clique's agenda to prolong its rule with the use of fascist schemes and scripted terror scenarios. They could not be fooled by Arroyo's fascist schemers and spin masters who weave one lie after another to cov-

er up Malacañang's responsibility for the Glorietta Mall and Batasang Pambansa bombings. Investigations being carried out by Arroyo's police completely lack credibility and enjoy zero trust among the people.

The Filipino people are determined to oppose all efforts by the Arroyo regime to carry out more acts of terrorist and fascist violence. Arroyo's fascist schemes are bound to fail even much sooner than those of Marcos. The people will resist and fight them all the way.

AB

Bombing at the Batasang Pambansa

Four people, including Ka Marcial Taldo of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Rep. Wahab Akbar of Basilan were killed in a bomb explosion outside the Batasang Pambansa building on November 13. The bombing injured many other people, including Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan of Gabriela Women's Party. The bombing came a few weeks after an explosion that ripped through the Glorietta Mall in Makati on October 19.

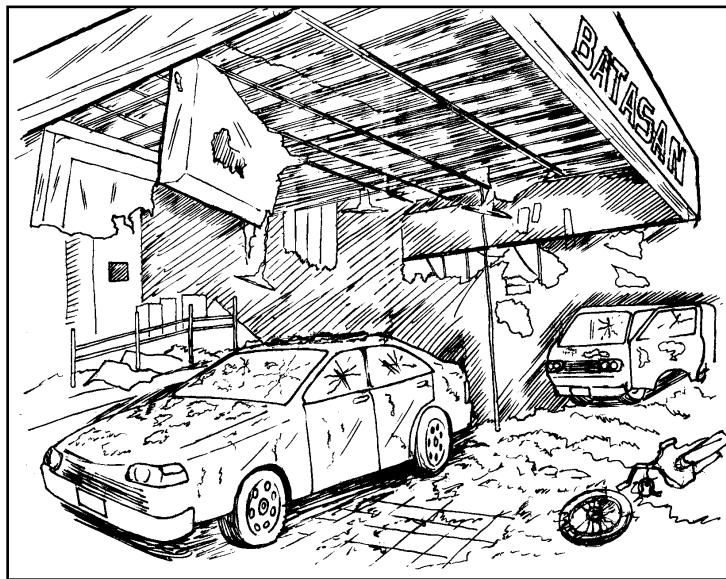
Malacañang and the police insist that the Batasang Pambansa bombing was the handiwork of the Abu Sayyaf and that the target was Akbar—although they are at a loss how to explain why the Abu Sayyaf would want to kill Akbar who is widely reputed to be their close ally.

To support the police's "theory," combined military and PNP operatives raided an alleged Abu Sayyaf safehouse in Payatas, Quezon City after two days. Three people were killed and three arrested in the raid. Allegedly seized from the house were pieces of "evidence" that would link the residents to the Batasan bombing. The evidence included

deeds of sale and registration documents of the motorcycle where the bomb was planted, a license plate bearing the number "8" issued to congressmen, T-shirts worn by Congressional employees and other items that would seem to establish a link to the bombing.

The police admit that the raid was undertaken for a different purpose and that they just happened to stumble upon these pieces of evidence. The conduct of the raid so soon after the bombing and the PNP's unbelievable luck have strengthened views that this was all part of Malacañang's scheme to cover up its role in the crime.

Doubts are rife over the credibility of the PNP investigation into the Batasang



Pambansa bombing, the same way many people find the police's accident angle on the Glorietta bombing incredible. There are growing demands for an independent probe. Among those calling for an independent investigation are the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Philippine Muslim Council for Islam and Democracy (PMCID).

AB



House Committee on Justice junks new impeachment case vs. Arroyo

The Lower House's Committee on Justice threw out on November 14 the impeachment case against Gloria Arroyo filed by Atty. Ruel Pulido for being "insufficient in substance." It was the third impeachment case against Arroyo junked by her minions in Congress since 2001.

The committee members went through the motions of discussing and debating the case, but nonetheless unhesitatingly threw it out in an unabashed demonstration of support for the fake president. The case was voted down 43-1. The lone dissenting vote was that of Rep. Edgar San Luis, a member of the Committee on Justice who endorsed the case in Congress. He was especially handpicked by Malacañang to endorse the case because though he ran as an independent, he is an Arroyo ally.

Prior to this, the committee had already junked the supplemental impeachment complaint filed by the United Opposition led by its spokesperson Atty. Adel Tamano. The supplemental complaint contained more serious bases for ousting Arroyo from power. The dismissal prompted a walkout by the minority from that day's hearing and a boycott of the hearing last November 14.

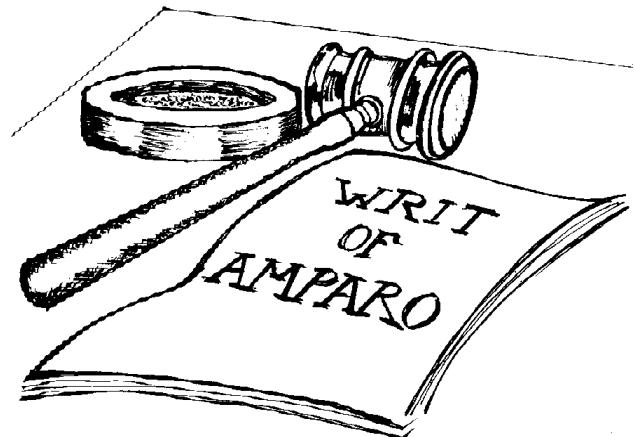
It is public knowledge that Malacañang is behind the weak impeachment complaint filed by Pulido. The feeble complaint was purposely filed to ensure its dismissal and preempt the opposition from filing a stronger case.

The reactionary constitution allows the filing of only one impeachment case against a government official in a year. Arroyo has thus been inoculated for a year from further threats of being unseated through legal means.

Meantime, Bayan Muna, Karapatan and former Vice Pres. Teofisto Guingona also filed new impeachment complaints but these were turned away by the House deputy secretary general for being violative of the one case per year ruling.

The opposition intends to question the legality of such a provision before the Supreme Court. Speaker Jose de Venecia stated that it is the Supreme Court that will be the final arbiter on the legal processes to be followed in filing impeachment complaints. **AB**

Freed through the writ of amparo



Two men abducted in Mindanao in October were freed after the courts granted their families' petitions for a writ of amparo.

Freed on November 14 was Luicito Bustamante, 22, by virtue of a writ of amparo issued by a Davao City court.

Earlier, on November 7, activist Ruel Muñasque, 33, was also freed by virtue of an order issued by a court in Pagadian City.

Bustamante was riding a motorcycle with two friends when then they were stopped at a checkpoint manned by CAFGU elements in Sitio Balogo, Barangay Malabog, Paquibato District, Davao City on October 27. They had planned on distributing campaign materials for the barangay elections. Bustamante's friends were freed but he was kept in detention and accused of being a member of the NPA.

Bustamante suffered two weeks of severe torture in the hands of the military. The torture was so intense that he defecated in his pants. His torturers forced him to eat his feces. They also smeared chili pepper on his face and wrapped it in plastic to smother him. He has numerous contusions and cigarette burns on his body. He was forced to sign a document stating that he is a member of the NPA. The court refused to accept the document as evidence because it was signed under duress.

Meanwhile, Muñasque, a leader of the Christian Youth Fellowship of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and a Bayan Muna or-





ganizer was arbitrarily arrested by elements of the 53rd IB in Barangay Poblacion, Dumalinao, Zamboanga del Sur on October 24.

Muñasque was aboard a van with farmer Roger Morales when they were arrested at a military checkpoint. Morales was freed the next day but the AFP continued detaining Morales on the flimsy excuse that he was bleeding from a wound in his knee. Muñasque's sister in cooperation with Karapatan filed a petition for a writ of amparo on October 31.

The Supreme Court also granted a writ of amparo last November 15 to Juvy Ortiz and Jeffrey Panganiban who were abducted by military men believed to be elements of the 76th IB in Gumaca, Quezon on October 21. The petitions were filed by Juvy's mother Maria Ortiz and Jeffrey's mother Leny Panganiban. The victims' parents also asked court representatives to conduct an inspection of the 76th IB's military camps in Barangay Principe, Gumaca and Barangay Marao, Padre Burgos, both in Quezon.

The court has likewise ordered Lt. Col. Ramon Tello, 76th IB chief, to answer the petition of the parents of the two youths in a hearing set for November 21.

Ortiz and Panganiban's parents said soldiers of the 76th IB arrested their sons along with their friend Rodel Monteroso on October 21 while the three were on their way to the house of Juvy's cousin. The youths

are accused by the military of being NPA members.

In a related development, relatives of Edwin Malapote, his daughter Edwinalyn, son-in-law Primo Redute and two month old grandchild filed a petition for a writ of amparo before the Supreme Court.

Malapote and couples Luil and Marivic Robles and Nestor and Rosalia Sanchez were abducted by elements of the 76th IB in Sitio Slow, Barangay Sidora, Agdangan, Quezon on October 28 but the military refused to acknowledge having them in custody.

News of the Malapote family's abduction reached the public only after the release of the Robles and Sanchez couples who reported the incident to Karapatan-Southern Tagalog.

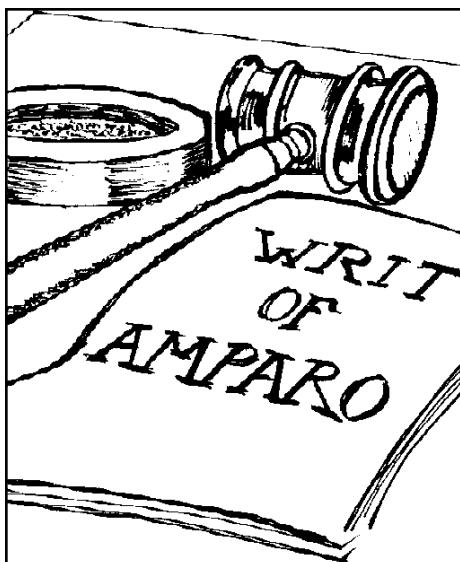
The military is accusing the Malapote family of membership in the New People's Army. They are currently detained at the Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) camp in Lucena City.

Human rights lawyers and organizations are also set to file a petition for a writ of amparo in behalf of "Nena," an eight-year old girl from Tuburan, Cebu whom elements of the 78th IB attempted to seize last October 16 from her guardians.

Meanwhile, a court has ordered the arrest of Arnel Enriquez, a CAFGU elements involved in the disappearance of University of the Philippines students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño who were seized in Hagonoy, Bulacan in June 2006.

AB

Advantages and limitations of the writ of amparo



Like any other legal instrument under the reactionary system that purportedly protects human rights, the writ of habeas corpus, the writ of amparo and the writ of habeas data may be availed of by the people to guard their interests.

Clearly, the prompt and successful application of writs of amparo indicate that the latter has more advantages over the writ of habeas corpus that has usually been disregarded and scoffed at by the military.

Nonetheless, we must be conscious of the limitations of these

instruments and grasp that they cannot completely stop the military from perpetrating extrajudicial killings, abductions and other fascist acts of violence against the people.

The military can still deny having custody of victims of abduction or refuse to submit their reports and records. There are no heavy penalties prescribed for such refusals and outright lies.

The military may also sabotage these legal instruments. They may copy the examples of Argentina and Chile where the military flooded the courts with false petitions for writs of amparo to bog down the process of granting such petitions and de-

Continued on "Advantages...", page 7

NPA metes punishment on 2 death squad agents in Samar

Two agents who serviced military death squads were meted capital punishment in Samar in October.

The punitive operations were undertaken by the revolutionary movement as part of its task of holding accountable those who are involved in political killings and sowing fascist terror among the people.

The Rodante Urtal Command (RUC) of the New People's Army (NPA) in Northern Samar implemented the death penalty last October 29 on Marcos "Macoy" Anquilo in Catarman, Northern Samar. Anquilo was an officer of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (ISAFP) and the Military Intelligence Group (MIG). He was involved in the planning and actual killing of Prof. Jose Maria Cui (on January 19, 2007) and Jessie Bacalso (on June 15, 2007). The victims, both legal activists, were killed within the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP) campus. Anquilo was the barangay captain of UEP Zone III.

Anquilo served as Lt. Col. Manuelito Usi's right hand. Usi served as 63rd IB chief in 2004-2005. Under his orders, Anquilo personally led a team that threw a molotov cocktail that nearly burned down the Bayan Muna headquarters in Barangay Cawayan, Catarman on April 6, 2005. He also connived with Usi in setting up a local chapter of the Guardians Brotherhood, Inc. which they used to wage psywar, sabotage and physical attacks against legal progressive organizations and activities in Catarman, especially within the UEP campus.

Anquilo exploited his position as barangay captain within UEP to set up an armed group to protect illegal gambling dens and drug syndicates.

The NPA also meted the death penalty on military

agent Elizabeth "Sabet" Gutierrez after her arrest by a team from the Arnulfo Ortiz Provincial Operations Command (NPA-Samar) in Cancaiyas, Basey, Samar on October 24.

Gutierrez and her husband Norberto "Huling" Gacuma conspired with the 62nd IB under Lt. Col. Jonathan Ponce to abduct activist couple Juliet Fernandez and Manuel Pajarito on May 11 in Pinabacdao, Samar. The victims were brought to military detachments and headquarters of the 62nd IB where they were severely tortured. They remain missing to date.

Gutierrez was also involved in the abduction of five civilians—four women and a man—accused of being NPA guerrillas. They were brought to the AFP detachment in Barangay Cogon where they were stripped naked and tortured. Three of them—Ina Gerellana, her mother and husband—remain missing.

With the military's support, Gutierrez won as barangay captain of Cancaiyas in elections held last October. Gutierrez sowed fear in the village to ensure her victory. She accused anyone opposed to her of membership in the NPA. Her victims were subsequently summoned to the 62nd IB detachment for interrogation. Among the victims of harassment were the former barangay chairman. He, along with other villagers left Cancaiyas two weeks before the elections in fear.

Gutierrez and her husband were formerly with the revolutionary movement but turned traitor and allowed themselves to be used as intelligence operatives by the military. The people's court had issued arrest orders against Gutierrez as far back as September 2006 on charges of espionage. AB

"Advantages...," from page 6

privé legitimate victims of prompt relief. This the military can do because of a provision stating that third parties may file petitions in the absence of known relatives. Another objective would be to preempt human rights advocates from filing petitions in behalf of such victims.

Under the military dictatorships in Argentina, victims of extrajudi-

cial killings even grew in number after the institution of the writ of amparo. The military merely contracted hired assassins to do the killings to conceal the state security forces' hand in these crimes—something the Philippine military has long been doing.

On the other hand, the people must use the writ of amparo as an added instrument in their fight against the military's fascist violence. The writ can become an ef-

fective instrument in the presence of strong and vigorous support from the mass movement and with active engagement with the military in a propaganda war.

At the same time, the people must link the struggle against fascism to their overall struggle for social justice and democracy. In the final analysis, we can only put an end to fascism by overthrowing the entire rotten system and ruling reactionary state. AB

Cagayan Valley holds successful political officers' conference

The Political Officers' Conference held August 9-17 in a guerrilla zone in Cagayan Valley ended with resounding success despite battalion-size operations by the AFP in nearby villages. The conference was attended by 32 delegates, all of them political officers from the various guerrilla fronts in the region, and a number of observers.

The conference's main objective was to arm the NPA's political officers with the knowledge necessary for them to effectively perform their duties.

The conference in particular, aimed to address the urgent and important task of expanding the people's army and setting up more guerrilla fronts. To do this, the delegates undertook an in-depth analysis of the problems faced in the process of the NPA's political and ideological work and came up with appropriate resolutions.

The conference cited the region's gains in advancing people's war. It cited the continued expansion of the NPA's areas of operation, expanding spheres of revolutionary influence, the people's army's ability to launch tactical offensives and advance the mass movement. The conference likewise cited the region's successful battle against conservatism and its victories in having frustrated successive AFP military campaigns to crush the NPA in the region.

But the conference likewise pinpointed certain issues related to implementing the fast-paced consolidation of army units, to cherishing and maintaining Red fighters, creating more platoons and setting up new guerrilla front committees in towns already previously part of ar-

eas of operations.

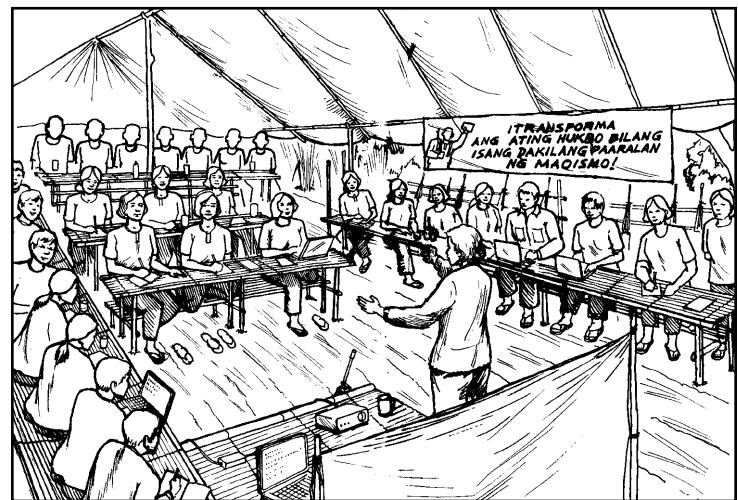
Based on in-depth studies of the problems faced in the conduct of the NPA's political work, the conference laid down the important tasks of political officers for the next two to three years.

Transform the people's army into a giant school of Maoism. The conference recognized that theoretical studies must be followed up with courses on practical issues. The delegates saw the urgency of drafting support curricula for regular courses.

They decided to come up with three supplementary courses for the Intermediate Party Course. Following a directive from the Central Committee, curricula will also be drafted to meet the needs of guerrilla front committees. Among the topics that should be covered by curricula or modules are those on style and methods of leadership and administration; recruiting and developing cadres; methods of analysis and methods of work; remoulding with respect to the issues of sacrifice, death, building a family and attitudes towards women.

The conference also agreed to prepare for the Advanced Party Course by collectively studying its references. It resolved to propagate among Red fighters and the masses the study of the various topics under the National-Democratic School.

The conference likewise reiterated the need to study actual experi-



ences in the conduct of tactical offensives, mass work, consolidation work, setting up and solving problems in local Party branches and fast-paced mass organizing work that takes the masses' particularities into consideration. It agreed to conduct studies on the burning issues of the day and on the writings of Comrade Jose Maria Sison.

Literacy and numeracy programs with the NPA must also be fast-tracked, so with coming up with means to raise the literacy level of the masses.

Strengthen unity within and outside the NPA. The conference cited the problem of sectarianism, in its particular manifestations among old and new cadres and Red fighters, between officers and fighters, between cadres and fighters and in attitudes towards women and minorities.

To address these issues, the conference called for mutual respect and affection among cadres and Red fighters and for everyone to struggle against feudal and bourgeois tendencies in the conduct of relationships.

The "three democracies" must be vigorously implemented and officers must also participate in production work, hauling in supplies



and other manual work to strengthen unity within the people's army. There is need to grasp and propagate studies on respect for women and for the culture of national minorities.

Officers must seriously look into themselves to root out the source of less than satisfactory relations with Red fighters. They must rid themselves of arrogance and of a tendency to belittle or disregard other views.

Improve dual leadership within the people's army to stress both military and political work in the NPA. Politics must be in command in all areas of work of the people's army. There must be thorough brainstorming of methods to expand and accelerate mass work. The conference called for struggle against both conservatism and adventurist tendencies in leading the masses and in the conduct of military work.

The conference resolved to put stress on the land issue in advancing antifeudal struggles and campaigns. Propaganda and cultural work must be advanced using various forms and creative means. Political officers must persevere in consolidating alliance work in barrios and towns covered by areas of operation and to the extent possible on the provincial level.

Political and military officers must unite on the content of Central Committee memorandum on recruiting and cherishing Red fighters. They must also popularize throughout the region the experiences of an NPA unit that was able to continuously conduct productive work in a cluster of barrios in a span of four to six months after harvesting the gains of mass work.

Time and effort must be invested in dismantling the enemy while dodging enemy attacks. Priority must be given to dismantling the CAFGU and preventing its establishment. Next in line are the police and lower-ranking soldiers with relatives in consolidated areas.

Class investigation and analysis must be conducted in areas of responsibility. These must be deepened and sudden twists in the political situation constantly monitored. All officers are directed to document and disseminate accumulated data and preliminary analyses from the barrio, town, front to the regional level. Studies on the content of class investigations will be conducted for the benefit of new or newly transferred cadres.

Even as political officers support the military command, develop the political requisites for military work. It is fine to continue the usual style of previous years where political officers give full support to the military command in the entire process of performing military work, from preparations to the actual conduct. During tactical offensives, political officers must ensure that comrades and local residents are politically and ideologically prepared both before and after military actions.

AB

Collective action by workers of Triumph International

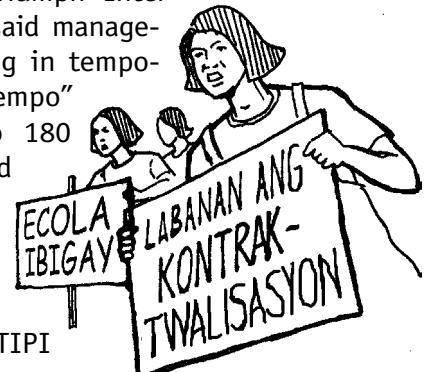
Workers of Triumph International Phils. Inc. (TIPI) linked dozens of brassieres in front of the TIPI office in Makati City last October 22 to condemn management's violation of their collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Among others, management's violations include the hiring of contractual workers, enforced massive layoffs of regular workers, the implementation of widespread casualization and its refusal to grant the emergency cost of living allowance (ECOLA). The more than 450 workers who joined the mass action also made a giant bra.

In a statement, the Bagong Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Triumph International (BKMTI) said management started taking in temporary workers or "tempo" in August. Up to 180 "tempo" were hired with four- to six-month contracts.

This violates their CBA which stipulates that TIPI may only hire temporary workers for seasonal work and to relieve regular workers who have gone on leave. Aside from this, the CBA terms clearly state that all workers hired by TIPI must enjoy probationary status and automatically become candidates for regularization after six months.

TIPI has also been forcibly retiring regular workers to give way to massive contractualization within the company. The objective is to weaken the union before 2010. The union disclosed that since 2000, the company has forcibly retired up to 400 workers and regularized only 35 new workers. More and more workers are being forcibly retired. This year alone, up to 71 workers were forced to retire by the company. TIPI has also violated a provision in the CBA stating that relatives of regular workers must be given priority in hiring whenever a vacancy arises in the factory.

Triumph International is a giant company owned



by a German family (Spieshofer/Braun). In the main, its factories manufacture various kinds of underwear like bras as well as women's lingerie. It also makes garments for expensive brands like Liz Claiborne, Victoria's Secret, Chicos, Dailin and Marks and Spencer. Sixty percent (60%) of its products are directly exported to Walmart, one of the biggest department store chains in the US. Triumph International has up to 40,000 workers worldwide.

In the Philippines, Triumph has two production centers—TIPI and Star Performace Inc., both within the FTI compound. There are more than 1,200 workers in TIPI alone, most of them women and union members.

TIPI has an estimated daily income of ₱20 million. It nonetheless refuses to grant the stipulated ₱12 ECOLA, claiming that its workers already receive ₱500 per day which is more than the minimum wage. This amount, however, still falls short of the more than ₱700 needed daily by a family of six.

It was TIPI's repression and refusal to grant the ECOLA that

prompted the workers to stage their protest actions.

They launched collective actions such as boycotts of overtime, which were joined by 95% of the union membership. They also conducted two short marches from the FTI gate and entered the factory all at the same time. They brought placards and "balatengga"^{*} They formed discussion groups where they tackled not only theirs but burning national issues. The union also filed a case of unfair labor practice against the company before the Department of Labor and Employment even as it continued conducting negotiations with management.

The union has sustained its protest actions for close to two months and has already achieved some gains. It has been able to temporarily restrain management from forcibly retiring regular workers. It has also succeeded in attaining regular status for a number of "tempo" workers. One-hundred and two contractual workers have thus been granted probationary status while the status of 80 others is being processed. Management has

also been forced to start negotiations for granting the ECOLA.

The workers are aware that they must defend their gains as TIPI can snatch them away any time. They face bigger battles in coming renegotiations for their CBA next year.

The workers of TIPI have shown the strength of their unity and collective action. Through militant action, they have further strengthened their union and raised the level of unity of all workers in the factory. They have proven that in continuously asserting their rights and welfare, they are quickly able to forge a unified working class stand and overcome what seemed to be intractable conditions and practices.

AB

**A streamer with strings attached to either side. Stones or other heavy objects are in turn attached to the ends of the string. Demonstrators simultaneously hurl the stones onto wires or horizontal tree branches, forcing the strings to wind around them several times. The streamers, with their slogans and demands, are thus held up and become difficult to pull down.*

Townsfolk free arrested rallyists

Thousands trooped to the municipal hall in Rapu-Rapu, Albay to free two anti-mining activists arrested by police on November 14.

Antonio Casitas, 69, spokesperson of Sagip Isla, Sagip Kapwa and Stephen Prestado, a student at the Ateneo de Naga University and a correspondent of *Bicol Xpress*, were arrested by the Rapu-Rapu police for allegedly leading a rally without a permit against Lafayette's destructive mining.

Umalpas Ka-Bicol, a group against destructive mining and land-use conversion said the protest action was held in front of the municipal hall simultaneous with a session by the Sangguniang Bayan. The rallyists demanded that the municipal government take a more definitive stand against the Rapu-Rapu Polymetalic Mining Project owned by Lafayette Mining Ltd. of Australia. They point-

ed to the foreign mining company as the cause of the latest massive fish kill and the death of other marine resources in the island and surrounding areas.

Casitas and Prestado were arrested at around 3:15 p.m. after the rally. Police detained and interrogated them for an hour, angering the townsfolk and prompting them to storm the municipal hall. Pressured, two municipal council members interceded with the police to release the two activists.

Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE) national coordinator Clemente Bautista Jr. roundly condemned the violent acts committed by the municipal government. He hailed the people for their vigilance in defending and fighting for their patrimony and their civil and political rights.

AB

NPA seizes 16 firearms in Compostela Valley

RED fighters of the New People's Army 5th Pulang Bagani Company under the Merardo Arce Command (MAC-NPA) in Southern Mindanao seized 16 firearms in simultaneous raids on two big agribusiness companies in Compostela Valley on November 12.

Said Ka Martin Henares, spokesperson of the 5th Pulang Bagani Company, the two disarming

operations were launched against the armed security guards of Compostela Plantations, Inc. (CPI) and Dizon Farms in Sitio Pilar, Barangay Babag, Monkayo. They carted away, among others, two baby armalites, five carbines, three shotguns, two .38 pistols and rounds of ammunition of various caliber, a VHF radio and a motorcycle.

The two agribusiness compa-

nies cooperate actively with the fascist forces of the 28th IB based in the province. CPI and Dizon Farms use their armed goons to harass and threaten communities around the plantations. Meanwhile, the 28th IB itself has a long record of killings and arson against houses of civilians. One of the persons they killed was mentally challenged.

KMP land reform bill targets big haciendas, plantations

BIG haciendas, plantations owned by big landlords, foreign corporations and the government and even military reservations form part of the main targets of a bill proposed by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) in the Lower House of Congress.

The bill, entitled "Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill" (GARB) aims to replace the bogus Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program that will end next year. Among the bill's targets, said KMP chair and Anakpawis president Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano are Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac, Hacienda Reyes in Quezon, Hacienda San Antonio and Santa Isabel in Isabela, Hacienda Bacan in Negros Occidental, Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, the stock farm in Dumaraao, Capiz in Panay and even the plantations of Dole, Del Monte and NDC-Guthrie in Mindanao.

A KMP study reveals that 60% of agricultural lands (almost nine million hectares) are privately owned by only 13% of landlords in the country. More than 20% of agricultural lands (three million hectares) is in the hands of only 9,500 individuals. Mariano stressed that land monopoly must be put to an end in the country because of the bitter truth that those who till the soil and feed the entire nation themselves do not have land to till and suffer from hunger.

Massive strikes in France and Germany

STRIKING workers in France and Germany paralyzed transportation last November 14. The strike in France was waged by workers in the transport, electricity and gas sectors against plans by Pres. Nicolas Sarkozy to reduce their pension benefits. The strike in Germany was launched by GDL, the union of workers of Deutsche Bahn (the German state-owned train company) to demand a 31% wage hike.

Transportation, gas and electricity were all paralyzed in the whole of France on October 18 in a 24-hour strike waged by seven big unions. The Sarkozy government stonewalled union demands not to reduce their benefits from early retirement.

In the second big strike last November 14, thirty-one universities sympathized with the demands of workers from seven unions that had earlier struck. Teachers and government employees have also started going on strike because of plans to lay off government workers, reduce pensions and school subsidies and charge matriculation in universities.

In Germany, the GDL union struck after Deutsche Bahn agreed to a mere 10% wage hike. The workers pointed out that they had the lowest wages in the transport sector in all of Europe. The strike was preceded by over three months of negotiations. Also looming is a state plan to privatize certain transportation sectors.